

Centers Programs

The NIEHS has created several specialized centers programs to support research in high-priority areas that could benefit from formal coordination and integration of the efforts of individual investigators. These programs incorporate multidisciplinary approaches, significant involvement of affected community members and advocates, and rapid dissemination of research findings to the public, with the overarching goal of accelerating the translation of findings into prevention and intervention strategies to improve public health.

Collaborative Centers for Parkinson's Disease Environmental Research

In response to the accumulating evidence for significant environmental influences in Parkinson's disease, the NIEHS launched the Collaborative Centers for Parkinson's Disease Environmental Research program in September 2002. Integrative collaboration among geneticists, clinicians, epidemiologists, and basic laboratory scientists is a key feature of this program. These centers will explore a number of key hypotheses related to environmental and genetic risk and protective factors for Parkinson's disease. One common focus is the interaction of pesticides with cellular mechanisms involved in protein degradation, oxidative stress, membrane transport, and regulation of endogenous dopamine levels.

For more information | <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/oc/news/parkin.htm>

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Centers for Population Health and Health Disparities

The NIEHS, in partnership with the National Cancer Institute, the National Institute on Aging, and the Office of Behavioral and Social Sciences Research, announced the creation of eight Centers for Population Health and Health Disparities in September 2003. These centers will support transdisciplinary research to examine how the social and physical environment, behavioral factors, and biologic pathways interact to determine health and disease in populations. Investigators will include community-based research approaches, with studies focusing on diverse topics such as obesity, cardiovascular disease, breast cancer, and mental health. Populations participating in the projects include African Americans, Hispanics, low-income whites, and the elderly.

For more information | <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/oc/news/8phctrs.htm>

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Breast Cancer and the Environment Research Centers

The Breast Cancer and the Environment Research Centers network was created in September 2003 by the NIEHS, with cofunding by the National Cancer Institute, to support multidisciplinary teams of scientists, clinicians, and breast cancer advocates to focus on how chemical, physical, and social factors in the environment interact with genetic factors to affect mammary gland development. The centers will conduct a coordinated epidemiologic study of the determinants of puberty in girls and will support efforts to integrate scientific information on histologic, pathologic, cellular, and subcellular changes that occur in normal mammary gland tissue across a woman's life span and compare this to exposure-induced changes.

For more information | <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/oc/news/4brcent.htm>

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